

Series I  
Correspondence,  
1932-1973

Box 9, Folder 11

Copy of naval  
message to ADM  
E.J. King,  
Dec. 16, 1944...

0899

Letter to Captain S. E. Morison, 6 March 1950, by Lieutenant  
Commander Aertsen, USNR. Discussion of Admiral Lees  
messages to Halsey at Leyte Task Force 34.

Oldendorf's Night Order Book, 21-27 October 1944

The material in this, while at times difficult to read,  
is all important information on Leyte--Halsey, Task Force  
34, etc.

0900

NAVWARCOL

Richard W. Bates Papers  
Box 9, F-12**UNCLASSIFIED** ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ 15-4070Dec. 1944

OUTGOING

Declassified by authority of  
General Declassification  
Schedule of Executive Order  
12958 dated 17 April 1995

160202

PRIORITY

FOR ADMIRAL KING'S EYES ONLY FROM KINKAID X YOUR  
111504 X (A) X EARLY SIGHTINGS MOVEMENTS AND STRIKES  
AGAINST SAN BERNARDINO FORCE WERE KNOWN TO ME THROUGH  
PROMPTLY TRANSMITTED DESPATCHES X (B) X OOM 3RD FLT  
240612 REMOVED CERTAIN FAST BATTLESHIPS CRUISERS AND  
DESTROYERS FROM TG 38.2 AND TG 38.4 TO FORM TF 34  
INDICATING PREPARATIONS TO ENGAGE STRONG ENEMY SURFACE  
FORCE THEN IN SIBUYAN SEA X (C) X CTF 38 DESPATCH ALSO  
NUMBER 240612 REPORTED QUOTE ENEMY FLEET MILLING AROUND  
AIMLESSLY IN SEVERAL GROUPS UNQUOTE X (D) X COM 3RD FLT  
241104 REPORTED RESULTS OF STRIKES AND THAT MAIN BODY  
REVERSED COURSE TO 270 ABOUT 1400 AND STATED QUOTE CTG  
38.3 HAS SCUTTLED PRINCETON AND CLOSED 38.2 AND 38.4 WHICH  
ARE NOW CONCENTRATED OFF ENTRANCE TO SAN BERNARDINO STRAIT  
UNQUOTE X (E) X COM 3RD FLT 241124 GAVE THE 1925 ITEM POSI-  
TION OF ENEMY FORCE IN SIBUYAN SEA AND STATED THAT QUOTE AM  
PROCEEDING NORTH WITH 3 GROUPS TO ATTACK ENEMY CARRIER  
FORCE AT DAWN UNQUOTE X NO MENTION WAS MADE OF THE NEWLY  
ORGANIZED TF 34 COMPOSED OF HEAVY SURFACE SHIPS REMOVED  
FROM THE CARRIER GROUPS AND WHICH THEREFORE WAS ASSUMED STILL  
TO BE OFF SAN BERNARDINO STRAIT X (F) X COM 3RD FLT 241215  
STATED QUOTE MY 241124 PART OF FORCE SIGHTED BY SNOOPER  
BETWEEN BURIAS AND MASBATE AT 2030 ITEM UNQUOTE X (G) X  
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0901

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160202

PRIORITY

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DURING EARLY MORNING HOURS IN THE PROCESS OF CHECKING  
AND EVALUATING THE SITUATION COM 3RD FLT WAS ASKED IF  
TF 34 WAS GUARDING SAN BERNARDINO STRAIT CTF 77 DESPATCH 2  
241912 X HIS REPLY COM 3RD FLT 242204 RECEIVED ABOUT SAME TIME  
AS REPORTS OF CONTACT CVE'S WITH ENEMY FORCE OFF SAMAR  
STATED QUOTE NEGATIVE X TF 34 IS WITH CARRIER GROUPS NOW  
ENGAGING ENEMY CARRIER FORCE UNQUOTE X (H) X IT WAS MANDATORY  
THAT 7TH FLEET FORCES BE DISPOSED TO PROTECT AMPHIBIOUS  
OPERATIONS BY GUARDING LEYTE GULF X INITIAL DISPOSITIONS  
SURFACE FORCES WERE SUCH AS TO COVER BOTH SOUTHERN AND  
EASTERN ENTRANCES TO LEYTE GULF COM 7TH FLT 280102 X THUS  
GUARDING AGAINST ENEMY FORCES ENTERING LEYTE THROUGH  
SURIGAO STRAIT OR THROUGH THE EASTERN ENTRANCE HAVING  
STEAMED THROUGH SAN BERNARDINO STRAIT AND DOWN THE COAST  
OF SAMAR ISLAND X IN ACCORDANCE CTF 77 DESPATCH 240325  
OF THE 5 PBY'S AVAILABLE 2 WERE ORDERED SEARCH MINDANAO SEA  
AND CAMOTES SEA AREA NIGHT OF 24-25 OCT AND THREE COVERED  
SECTORS S, T, U OF SEARCH PLAN F (REVISED) WHICH EXTEND  
FOR 600 MILES BETWEEN BEARING 341 AND 017 FROM TACLOBAN  
FLIGHTS PASSING OUT EASTERN ENTRANCE TO LEYTE X NO CONTACTS  
WERE MADE BY NIGHT SEARCHES X CVE'S WERE ORDERED BY CTF 77

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0902

# UNCLASSIFIED

160202

PRIORITY

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DESPATCH 241656 ITEM TO MAKE DAWN SEARCH OF SECTORS  
340 TO 030 ORIGIN SULUAN ISLAND DISTANCE 135 MILES X  
NO CONTACT REPORTS RECEIVED UNTIL VISUAL CONTACT WITH  
ENEMY FORCE HAD BEEN MADE BY CVE'S X CVE'S WERE ORDERED  
BY THE SAME DESPATCH TO MAINTAIN 24 HOUR VT STRIKE GROUP  
WITH 12 TORPEDO LOADED READY FOR LAUNCHING WITH VF ESCORT  
IN EVENT SURFACE CONTACT X BEFORE DAWN TU 77.4.1 LAUNCHED  
STRIKE AGAINST REMNANTS ENEMY FORCE IN MINDANAO SEA X  
MACARTHUR INFORMED

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FROM: CTF 77  
TO: COMINCH, CNO

RJS

8-S

RDO CR147

OUT

DECEMBER 16

160202

0903

At Sea

October 17, 1944.

(c). Hydrographic unit is in the area and we are watching their maneuvers on our screen.

Anyone else should be enemy but may be stragglers who are unreported.

Hawmeyer don't get caught but be alert for some enemy surface snipers as well as even larger forces.

Tomorrow, if all goes well, we are going inside to carry out the A-2 day program. Parsons should be rigged so all large ships and degaussing gear turned on.

The enemy knows that we are in the Keyhole area and his counter threats will soon appear. Perhaps tonight, - perhaps tomorrow. Be alert. Be alert. Call me as necessary.

Steaming along route Shearwater with Task Group 77.2 less Potomac and Pass plus T.G. 77.6 plus San Carlos. In cruising disposition 5 P.O. Lanesville is guide in center of disposition. Other stations are as indicated in the diagrams in flag plot.

Course 120°, axis 307. speed 12 knots.

at 2340 on signal course will be changed to the right to 298° true. Use the execution method allowing 5 minutes between the signal and the execution. We are returning from Keyhole gulf for the night and expect to return and be off the coast at about 0600.

Units of our force are around us as follows

- (a) Carrier group - 77.4 are proceeding to operating areas in Fernald and expected to arrive at 0530.
- (b) Torpedo attack force is remaining in area south of 10° 30' and north of 10° 10'.

20-24 1000

Parsons  
Prattville CT-77.2

0904

best efforts.

The battleships are moving along Lat 10° 46' N in an easterly and westerly direction and the cruisers are moving in a similar manner maintaining the battle disposition. Guide is in the Louisville for the cruisers and OTC is also. Disposition is to be maneuvered to insure that BBs are not to westward of 46-03 nor to eastward 46-15.

A plan to release all ships at about 0500 so that they may be ready for F/S maneuvers at daylight.

Tomorrow battleships will fuel destroyers as per schedule to be announced later.

Watch all ships with care. Keep a close radar and visible check.

Keep me informed

0-4 1207 ~~Admiral~~ ~~Admiral~~ ~~Admiral~~

Comd'g T.G. 77.2

at Sea

Oct 21, 1944

Underway with T.G. 72.2 less Honolulu, Mississippi, Maryland, California, Sigsbee, Conner, Pross. Forming battle disposition in A-one on easterly course at 5 knots. Some ships have joined up others are in rank. The destroyers, after they join up, will be directed to form a screen around light forces - and around battleships. There will be three BBs in the battle line tonight notably Tennessee, California, ~~and~~ ~~Albatross~~ ~~Albatross~~.

The idea of this deployment is to protect the transport to be from surface attack especially from the south near Suragao Strait. Also to drive off enemy forces which may enter the Suragao Strait fleet. The more probable attack is from the south and therefore the deployment is designed to counter that threat.

The deployment is unusually slow and does not reflect our

0905

at Sea  
October 22, 1944.

The plan is to use them to protect the left flank of our forces from that position while awaiting call from us.

We are out here to protect our amphibious shipping against enemy raids from Surigao Straits (East or South). What these enemy forces may be if we meet them is not known but we must be prepared for the unexpected.

We plan to return about dawn when certain of our forces will be used for F/S missions. We should fuel and take ammunition aboard tomorrow.

Keep alert for our forces as well as enemy. Many of our forces are working around in this area and may become our even greater menace than the enemy.

Keep me informed.  
Call me as necessary. Perry

00-04 12N 4-E 21-22 Please Admiral Cady

Steaming in company with Louisville, (F) Portland, Minneapolis, Denver, Columbia and Portsmouth, Claxton, Halford, Welles, Benning, Thorne, and Kewitz in special cruising disposition with ships located as indicated on diagram in flag plot.

Commencing at point 4 miles to eastward of Tay Tay Point it is planned to operate along the corresponding parallel of latitude course 090 speed 05 until a point 16 miles to eastward of Tay Tay Point had been reached. This course will be reversed to 270 or as necessary to overcome effect of set and drift of current until the starting point is reached again when course will be reversed to 090 and so on. As is 090. All of these changes of course will be by turn movement.

The battleships of this T.G. are lying to in the vicinity of Lat 10-46' N. Long 125-03 E. and are available in case of need.

0906



To insure that we arrive at our rendezvous in the landing area as desired by the situation there.

We can receive an attack to - night particularly by moonlight but we can reduce it in the morning not only by land-based planes but also by carrier based from the westward - So keep alert! And keep everyone else alert!

Tomorrow we return to port some ships have fueling tasks, other have replacement tasks other F/S tasks. Be sure 'that all get us stations as time'.

Keep me informed.

20-24273

060415

*W. H. Anderson*  
 Rear Admiral  
 Comd'g T.G. 77.2

at Sea  
 October 23, 1944.

Steaming in Houseville guide, in company with Portland, Minneapolis, Denver, Columbia, Newcomb, Berrien, Edwards, Halford, Thorne, Bryant, Henry, Claxton, Welles, in special cruising disposition with ships located as shown on the diagram in flag plot.

Engaging along the parallel of latitude extending from Point between a point 4 miles to the eastward of Tay Tay and a point 19 miles to the eastward - giving a run of 15 miles. At the end of the run to the eastward we are therefore upwards of 20 miles away from our battle line. This is an excessively large distance but can be corrected if information is properly evaluated in a timely manner. Speed 7.5 knots, Course 090, 04 is 090.

Course changes must be made at about 2100, 2300, 0100, 0300 and then as necessary.

0907

at Sea

October 24, 1944

Cruising in battle formation with T.G. 77.2 and 77.3 as per Battle Plan, across the southern entrance to Leyte Gulf - across Surigao Strait, and just south of Mindanao Island.

Course east and west with the flank forces maintaining station on the battle line. Speed 5 knots.

The enemy are expected to come up Surigao Strait tonight and may be in strength. If they are we may have a battle on our hands as we are short of A.P. for our battleships.

Read the battle plan with care!

I will be up all night so refer everything to me without hesitation.

*Forster*  
Rear Admiral  
Comdg T.G. 77.2 & 77.3

W  
F

at Sea

October 25, 1944

We have had quite a day today with the great neutrality of Surigao Strait under our belt. Also our presence has kept the enemy, who has been attacking our carriers, from attacking our forces in the Gulf. Our victorious presence off the entrance gave him pause.

Tonight we are cruising in battle formation across both of the entrances to Surigao Strait to prevent any attempt by the Japs to enter.

Course approximately  $215^{\circ}$  and  $35^{\circ}$ .

Battle plan same as yesterday but with reduced destroyers.

I will be up all night so refer everything to me.

In the early morning an attack may be expected. Take precautions.

*Forster*  
Rear Admiral  
Comdg T.G. 77.2 & 77.3

W  
F

0908

